

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 2  
**Output Group:** 2.4 - Funding for Higher Education

#### DEST Question No. E790\_07

Senator Carr provided in writing.

#### Question:

1. Can you tell me the date on which the *Higher Education Report 2005* was released?
2. Can you clarify whether HESA requires this report to be tabled in the Parliament?
3. Does HESA require the report to be published?
4. When was the *Higher Education Report 2004-05* published?
5. When was the final Triennial Report published? What years did it cover?
6. Can you confirm that the old triennial reports were published prior to the commencement of the relevant triennium? They pertained to the future, rather than the past? They announced future funding?
7. Can you explain what is the purpose of the *Higher Education Report 2005*? Does it announce future funding?
8. Does it do no more than report formally on events that happened about two years ago? What does it add to public knowledge about universities?
9. Can you confirm that, in some instances – for example level of HECS debt – the 2005-06 DEST Annual Report provides more up-to-date figures than this new 2005 report? Does the 2005 report only give HECS debt for calendar year 2005? Does the Annual Report provide HECS debt to June 2006?
10. What is the purpose of producing a report such as this?
11. Will you be producing further reports like this? With what purpose? When will the 2006 report appear?
12. Why does the Department not include the material in these reports in the Annual Report instead – or as a supplement to the Annual Report?

#### Answer:

##### *Higher Education Report – publication*

1. The *Higher Education Report 2005* was published on the DEST website on 16 January 2007.
2. The *Higher Education Support Act 2003* does not require the Higher Education Report to be tabled in Parliament.

3. No.
4. The *Higher Education Report 2004-05* was published in September 2005.
5. The final triennial report produced was the *Higher Education Report for the 2004 to 2006 Triennium*. It was published in June 2004.
6.
  - (a) The *Higher Education Report for the 2004 to 2006 Triennium* was published in 2004, after the commencement of the triennium.
  - (b) Triennial reports contained an overview and review of the performance of the Higher Education sector in the preceding year (for example, 2003 in the *Higher Education Report for the 2004 to 2006 Triennium*).
  - (c) Triennial reports also contained projections and allocations for future years. Triennial reports did not announce future funding.
7. The *Higher Education Report 2005* provides:
  - an overview of the higher education sector and its achievements in 2005, including ongoing implementation of the Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future package of higher education reforms, new Australian Government policies and recent sector developments;
  - details of funding under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*;
  - a review of the performance of higher education providers in delivering student places and other Australian Government funded outcomes in 2005; and
  - information on funding allocations in 2005.

The *Higher Education Report 2005* does not announce future funding.

8. See answer to question 7.
9.
  - (a) The DEST Annual Report 2005-06 reports on the 2005-06 financial year. As such, where possible, figures up to June 2006 were included.
  - (b) Yes, as the *Higher Education Report 2005* reports only on the 2005 calendar year.
  - (c) Yes.
10. See answer to question 7.
11.
  - (a) It is yet to be determined whether the report will be produced in future.
  - (b) See answer to question 7.
  - (c) If produced, the publishing date of the *Higher Education Report 2006* will be determined by the availability of relevant data.
12. The DEST Annual Report contains information about the role of the department, its corporate governance arrangements and management accountability framework. It also reports on its performance against the outcomes and outputs framework set out in the 2005–06 Portfolio Budget Statements. The Higher Education Report provides detailed information and analysis of the higher education sector and its funding. It would not be possible to provide a large volume of information relating to the higher education sector within the framework of the DEST Annual Report.